

Sub D1 1. (Once amended) A method for protecting a plant against an environmental stress, said method comprising the steps of:

C1 (a) providing [producing] a transgenic plant cell that expresses substantially pure DNA encoding a polypeptide that includes a [comprising a recombinant] protein kinase (PK) domain [-containing gene integrated into the genome of said transgenic plant cell and positioned for expression in said transgenic plant cell, said PK domain-containing gene being capable of increasing the level of tolerance to an environmental stress]; and

(b) growing a transgenic plant from said plant cell, wherein said DNA is expressed in said transgenic plant, and wherein said transgenic plant has increased tolerance to an environmental stress compared to a corresponding untransformed plant [PK domain-containing gene is expressed in said transgenic plant].

C2 6. (Once amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the expression of said polypeptide [PK domain-containing gene] activates the expression of a stress-protective protein-encoding gene.

7. (Once amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said DNA [PK domain-containing gene] is constitutively expressed in said transgenic plant.

Sub D2 24. (Once amended) A [transgenic] plant comprising substantially pure DNA encoding a polypeptide that includes a [recombinant] PK domain [gene integrated into

C3 the genome of the transgenic plant and positioned for expression in the plant], wherein said ~~polypeptide~~ [PK domain gene is capable of increasing] increases the level of tolerance, on a plant expressing said ~~polypeptide~~ [PK domain gene], to an environmental stress.

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Sub D37 36. (Once amended) Substantially pure DNA encoding a polypeptide consisting essentially of a PK domain [polypeptide], said polypeptide being capable of increasing the level of tolerance to an environmental stress in a transgenic plant.

C4 37. (Once amended) The DNA of claim 36, wherein said DNA encodes a polypeptide [which] that confers tolerance to dehydration.

38. (Once amended) The DNA of claim 36, wherein said DNA encodes a polypeptide [which] that confers tolerance to salinity.

39. (Once amended) The DNA of claim 36, wherein said DNA encodes a polypeptide [which] that confers tolerance to a temperature stress.

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C5 42. (Once amended) The DNA of claim 41, wherein said expression control region comprises a [a] promoter.

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